**Tech Advisory Council Meeting**

**March 29, 2011**

Present: Tim Moynahan, Sheila Adams, Laura Sunderland, Chris Pollet, Peggy Balboni, Judy Prince, Jim Katkin, Lane Richardson, Mary Lyons, and Liz Barrett

Not Present: Bonnie Vadala

Chris opened the meeting stating that at the last meeting a lot of time was spent on professional development and that this meeting should stay more on track with the agenda so that we can complete as many items as possible. The technology plan is due to the state on June 30th.

**TAC (Technology Advisory Council)**

The conversation opened with defining the role of the TAC (Technology Advisory Council). The question was can the council fulfill the role of the committee to update the tech plan.

The TAC discussion about this included:

The tech advisory council does not override the committees. The committees do the bulk of the work and then bring their suggestions to the TAC.

Liz Barrett said the question is what do children need to go into Portsmouth High School for continuity of tech skills, and to meet our vision.

The TAC evolved from a school board meeting two months ago where it was felt that technology needed more directed plans on how to progress with technology in the school. It was suggested that a Technology Advisory Council be created led by the Principals. RJH has a strong working committee whereas RES has just a couple of people interested. It was suggested that the two tech committees combine and work together.

Jim Katkin explained the TAC is not the same as the Tech Committees. The TAC is to develop policies, report back to the Superintendent and Business Administrator as well as review what the tech committees are projecting for the future. The TAC is a sounding board for the committees to share recommendations. The TAC should meet three or four times a year.

Chris Pollet believes the role of the Technology Advisory Council is to listen to the proposed plan from the Tech Committees, support them, and inform the School Board, Budget Committee, PLCs and others of the plans. Creating a tech plan is an ever changing document where we try to stay ahead with hardware, software and other technology and that comes at a cost. Planning a budget in these economical times is a huge challenge. When the budget is presented to the TAC the administrators have to stand strong on their requests and if teachers feel the need is great for these items they should be there to validate these needs, also.

We should meld theoretical ideas with reality, the vision should never change, and we should review that vision is still continuing the way we have projected.

**Tech Plan**

The plan should fit our vision. Sheila explained that originally we had a tech committee in each school and then a District Technology Committee with members from each school that came together to write the existing tech plan.

Mary Lyons stated all decisions need to be made on a vision; if the vision is not clear, decisions underneath do not have direction. Technology is part of the culture and it needs to be embedded in education. After a vision is created we will have the direction needed to develop the plan.

Tm Moynahan explained the 2009-2012 tech plan came back from the state approved only through June 2011 because it needed information added to the plan concerning *content filtering* and *records retention* as well as an updated proposed budget before returning it to the state for re-approval in June. The state wants to know what content filtering software we are using and how long we are retaining records.

Chris asked if the current plan is updated with the additions of the content required by the state and they reapproved it, how long would it extend the life of this plan. Tim was not sure, but will find out from the state how long it would extend this plan. He thought possibly 3 years. If it did get reapproved for 3 years this would allow the committees to meet and start from the ground up to create the next tech plan. This plan should include professional development plans as well as an open ended budget to allow for purchase of different new technology that may become available.

Lane felt we should focus and write a tech plan with a few basic things included in it, and then find what staff wants and move in that direction. One example she used it that the iPads are a wonderful tool. The Jr. High has just purchased some. The elementary school has put in a REF grant to acquire some because of their versatility. Melissa Camire is looking into some for SPED to use with students, also.

Another example of Technology integration is the document camera use at RES. They can be used to take writing samples or start a portfolio which will allow teachers to see where the students started and where they are currently. They can project an image on a TV or screen for students to view and discuss items. They are used to share writing samples. Students get very excited about seeing their own work on a big screen and sharing it with others.

Mary Lyons suggested relating the document camera use to actual information on how it has improved student outcomes, not just the use of this tool.

The District Technology Committee needs to get together now and update the plan for acceptance from the TAC in May and then the School Board in June. After that it can be sent in to the state for approval.

**Vision**

Peggy Balboni feels the vision and goals need to be updated because they are too wordy.

**Professional Development**

Teachers are coming forward to share, but some do not know what others are doing in their classrooms. It would be nice to be able to take a day and have a show and tell time in classrooms to see how and what technology is being used, then come back with evidence stating what the teachers are using daily. This would be physical evidence of what is being used here at the schools and what might be needed. This would allow the committee member to be eyes and ears for the Principals to see what is being done and share these ideas with the Principal. Lane Richardson recommended visiting outside of Rye to see what’s happening in other schools and districts.

Many different ways have been used it the past for teachers to share\teach technology to the rest of the staff and get reimbursed for their time and work. We should look at these and create more staff development opportunities using the talents of own staff.

Another suggestion was to create support groups to meet weekly to share ideas and information.

**e-portfolios**

Lane reported that Bonnie has the RES students saving work into their portfolios. Each student has a folder on the server where they save their work. These portfolios will be copied to a cd and sent home at the end of the school year with students in grades 4 and 5.

RJH is working on a student reflective piece to be included in the student portfolios.

Peggy Balboni recognized that e-portfolios are a big item that will need a lot of manpower.

Mary explained that the SAU50 Tech/Media group has had conversations about the management and assessment of these portfolios. A good start would be that everyone who is familiar with the tech standards have students save their work to document their use of the standards for the portfolios. These portfolios will be organized and assessed over time.

Chris explained that for RJH there needs to be a sub-committee to have a conversation about how to assess these portfolios.

Teachers are only asked to use work they are already doing, showing the standards and indicators students are using to do this work and to save this work to the portfolios. They are not being asked to create the entire portfolio.

Sheila Adams said that this problem of what to put into the portfolios is not a unique problem to Rye; they are struggling at the district and state levels with this decision, too.

Peggy wants research from other schools/districts as to what and how they are doing their portfolios. Parents would like to see their child’s work on the web. Should the child’s portfolio be web-based? Do we need to purchase software to do this?

Mary Lyons has asked Administrators to pilot a program to manage the data. Right now the people piloting this program are Mary Lyons, Melissa Camire and one person from Newington. There are ten different areas to be set up in order to check the access and permissions.

Bonnie will present at the next School Board meeting and show some of the student portfolios that are already developed at RES. The Jr. High was asked to present at this same time, too. That will not work for them at this time do to other projects going on. Jr. High students have work on their blog that can be seen.

The School Board would like to have all the portfolios stored in one place and available for parents to view.

Tim will be the facilitator of the district tech committee. The team will include people from both schools. When the committee meets they will make a decision of who will take the notes, send reminders of meetings, keep the work on track and be the time keeper. This meeting will use the next TAC time on April 19, 2011.

Date: April 19th for the **District Technology** **Committee** to begin.